



# The Laws Of The Public Policy Process

1. Never give a bureaucrat a chance to say no.
2. Don't fire all your ammunition at once.
3. Don't get mad except on purpose.
4. Effort is admirable. Achievement is valuable.
5. Make the steal more expensive than it's worth.
6. Give 'em a title and get 'em involved.
7. Expand the leadership.
8. You can't beat a plan with no plan.
9. Political technology determines political success.
10. Sound doctrine is sound politics.
11. In politics, you have your word and your friends; go back on either and you're dead.
12. Keep your eye on the main chance and don't stop to kick every barking dog.
13. Don't make the perfect the enemy of the good.
14. Remember the other side has troubles too.
15. Don't treat good guys like you treat bad guys.
16. A well-run movement takes care of its own.
17. Hire at least as many to the right of you as to the left of you.
18. You can't save the world if you can't pay the rent.
19. All gains are incremental; some increments aren't gains.
20. A stable movement requires a healthy, reciprocal I.O.U. flow among its participants. Don't keep a careful tally.
21. An ounce of loyalty is worth a pound of cleverness.
22. Never miss a political meeting if you think there's the slightest chance you'll wish you'd been there.
23. In volunteer politics, a builder can build faster than a destroyer can destroy.
24. Actions have consequences.
25. The mind can absorb no more than the seat can endure.
26. Personnel is policy.
27. Remember it's a long ball game.
28. The test of moral ideas is moral results.
29. You can't beat somebody with nobody.
30. Better a snake in the grass than a viper in your bosom.
31. Don't fully trust anyone until he has stuck with a good cause which he saw was losing.
32. A prompt, generous letter of thanks can seal a commitment which otherwise might disappear when the going gets rough.
33. Governing is campaigning by different means.
34. You cannot make friends of your enemies by making enemies of your friends.
35. Choose your enemies as carefully as you choose your friends.
36. Keep a secure home base.
37. Don't rely on being given anything you don't ask for.
38. In politics, nothing moves unless it's pushed.
39. Winners aren't perfect. They made fewer mistakes than their rivals.
40. One big reason is better than many little reasons.
41. In moments of crisis, the initiative passes to those who are best prepared.
42. Politics is of the heart as well as of the mind. Many people don't care how much you know until they know how much you care.
43. Promptly report your action to the one who requested it.
44. Moral outrage is the most powerful motivating force in politics.
45. Pray as if it all depended on God; work as if it all depended on you.

Morton C. Blackwell  
President, The Leadership Institute